

Service for Caversham Park on 13 December 2020, 3rd Sunday in Advent, Year B

Please start playing this at 10:55

Preliminary music: Chorale prelude on *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (J.S. Bach, BWV 645)
– 4:13

Introduction

We meet to celebrate the coming of Christ into the world.
The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us
and we beheld his glory.

Light the three candles on the Advent Ring and candle on the table

Reading Genesis 1:1-5 - SARAH

Lord Jesus Christ, you were in creation from the beginning. Help us to see you in all the wonders of the universe.
Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn Come and join the celebration

Reading Isaiah 40:1-11 – PAULA

Lord Jesus Christ, you come to comfort God's people, to save us, to tend us like a shepherd.
Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn Hark the herald angels sing – 3:30

Reading Galatians 4:1-7 – STEPHEN

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Son of God, and you come to make us God's heirs together with you and all people, and bring us to freedom.
Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn In the bleak midwinter – 3:41

Reading Luke 1:26-38 – PAT

Lord Jesus Christ, you come as the unexpected gift, you give up your power and strength and make yourself depend upon us. Give us the grace to serve you in all things.

Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn While shepherds watched – 3:30

Reading Luke 2:1-21 – MARGARET

Lord Jesus Christ, your coming is proclaimed to those who are on the edge, to people who like you are despised and rejected. Teach us to respect all people and to serve them as we would serve you.

Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn Silent Night – 2:37

Reading Isaiah 60:1-6 – AUDREY

Lord Jesus Christ, your coming is made known to people of every language and race and nation. Bring your good news to all the world, and lead all in authority to obey you and rule in wisdom.

Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn See him lying on a bed of straw – 1:32

Reading Matthew 2:1-12 – DOROTHY

Lord Jesus Christ, wise men came to greet you and honour you with their gifts. Help us to give generously to you and to all in need.

Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn We three kings of Orient are – 3:53

Reading John 1:1-14 – MICHAEL

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the incarnate Word of God. Teach us to believe your Word, to recognise your presence in the world, and to know that you have given us the power to become the children of God.

Come to us, Lord Jesus,
Be born in us today.

Hymn Little Jesus sweetly sleep – 1:34

Prayers

Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.
Amen.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

God sent his angels from glory to bring to shepherds
the good news of Jesus' birth.
Amen. We thank you, Lord.

You have heard his story,
the story of God's own Son.
Amen. We thank you, Lord.

May he fill you with joy
to bring this good news to others today.
Amen. We thank you, Lord.

Hymn O come, all ye faithful – 3:42

Genesis 1:1-5 Sarah Viney

- (1) In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth,
- (2) the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
- (3) Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.
- (4) And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.
- (5) God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Isaiah 40:1-11 Paula Andrews

- (1) Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
- (2) Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.
- (3) A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- (4) Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
- (5) Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- (6) A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.
- (7) The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.
- (8) The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.
- (9) Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"
- (10) See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
- (11) He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Galatians 4:1-7 Stephen Raybould

- (1) My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property;
- (2) but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father.
- (3) So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world.
- (4) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
- (5) in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.
- (6) And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
- (7) So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Luke 1:26-38 Pat Gray

(26) In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,

(27) to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

(28) And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

(29) But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

(30) The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

(31) And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

(32) He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.

(33) He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

(34) Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

(35) The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

(36) And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.

(37) For nothing will be impossible with God."

(38) Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Luke 2:1-21 Margaret Dimmick

- (1) In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.
- (2) This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.
- (3) All went to their own towns to be registered.
- (4) Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.
- (5) He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.
- (6) While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.
- (7) And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
- (8) In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.
- (9) Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.
- (10) But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
- (11) to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.
- (12) This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."
- (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
- (14) "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"
- (15) When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

(16) So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

(17) When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;

(18) and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

(19) But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

(20) The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

(21) After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Isaiah 60:1-6 Audrey Preston

(1) Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

(2) For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

(3) Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

(4) Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

(5) Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

(6) A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Matthew 2:1-12 Dorothy Abrey

- (1) In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,
- (2) asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."
- (3) When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;
- (4) and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.
- (5) They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:
- (6) 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"
- (7) Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.
- (8) Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."
- (9) When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.
- (10) When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.
- (11) On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
- (12) And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

John 1:1-14 Michael Andrews

(1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(2) He was in the beginning with God.

(3) All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being

(4) in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

(5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

(6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

(7) He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

(8) He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

(9) The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

(10) He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.

(11) He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

(12) But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,

(13) who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

(14) And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.